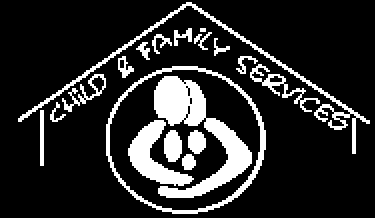


Inside CFSA...

*Bi-weekly FAQ's & Facts FAX
For Our Child-Serving Community*

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2003 Budget Proposal Will Support Reformed CFSA

Over the ten months since the end of the Federal Court Receivership, the District has made progress toward reforming the child welfare system and meeting the Federal Court's expectations. Approval of the Child and Family Services Agency's \$224 million proposed budget is a critical part of maintaining that momentum.

"The FY2003 proposal is the first budget developed by CFSA as a new cabinet-level agency of the District, with new responsibilities for dealing with both child abuse and child neglect, the licensing and monitoring of foster homes and group homes, and for independent personnel recruitment and procurement. It is the first budget that reflects the full child welfare reform enacted by the District in April 2001," said CFSA Director Olivia Golden. The request represents an increase of \$21 million in local dollars (\$35 million total) over the FY2001 spending level of \$189 million. The total increase is 18 percent over two years.

The budget request reflects the Mayor's deep commitment to the District's most vulnerable children and families. In particular, it reflects four key commitments by the District:

- A commitment to bringing services up to standard for our most vulnerable children;
- A commitment to the new, reformed agency;
- A commitment to ensuring that children grow up in permanent families; and
- A commitment to strong management and maximization of federal revenue.

CFSA's FY 2003 budget also reflects the full cost of funding places for children to live when they cannot safely live at home, and the cost of hiring enough social workers to meet the needs of children and families and still carry reasonable caseloads.

In the past, the agency did not accurately estimate the cost of finding placements for children, but that omission was partially hidden because of under-spending in other parts of the budget, such as social worker staffing. That meant the agency could not afford to fully fund placements, services, and social workers at the same time. This budget changes that pattern.

A large portion of the increase is due to new and realistic estimates of the cost of adoption subsidies for families who adopt special – needs children. As a result of the Federal and District commitment to adoptions, many more families are able to invite a child into their homes as a member of the family. This is an important policy victory because it means that more children are growing up in permanent families rather than moving from one temporary setting to another. The cost of adoption subsidies increased from about \$6 million in FY 1999 to an estimated \$19.6 million in FY03.

The FY 2003 request includes \$2.4 million for 40 new social worker and supervisory positions, to bring caseload ratios to a level that allows the agency to keep children safe, provide high—quality case management services to both children and families, and meet the requirements of the court's Modified Final Order.

As required by the Federal Court Orders, the FY 2003 budget includes a rate increase for foster parents to ensure that the added costs of caring for a foster child do not make it impossible for families to make this critically important commitment to our children.

The new reformation of the child welfare system in the District of Columbia depends heavily on the passage of the FY 2003 budget. With this support the District can to continue meeting expectations and fully persuading the Court to end the probationary period and begin a disengagement process, the effects will add to the District's credibility well beyond child welfare.

Moving Day at CFSA . . .

CFSA's new responsibilities have expanded its space need beyond the capacity of the building at 400 6th St., SW. Planning is underway for relocating a number of offices to 955 L'Enfant Plaza, which already houses the FACES, computerized case management system. Social workers and attorneys will at last be consolidated at the 6th street site.

The following units have moved to the new facilities at L'Enfant Plaza:

- Office of Licensing and Monitoring (724-7204);
- Office of Policy and Program Support (724-7100);
- Human Resources Administration (724-7373);
- Fiscal Operations, (except the eligibility unit and emergency disbursement operations) (724-7776)

The move occurred on March 15, 2002. On April 15th, the 5th floor of the 6th Street building renovated to accommodate our new expanded legal team.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month!

Report Child Abuse & Neglect. You could save a child's life.

202-671-SAFE (671-7233)